

## ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

The present invention provides methods for initiating, capturing, maintaining and multiplying embryogenic cultures of coniferous plants. Methods include the use of novel media compositions containing folic acid, biotin, pH buffers, gibberellin inhibitors and gas-tight environment treatments to improve the frequency of embryogenic tissue initiation, capture, maintenance and multiplication. The methods are well suited for initiating embryogenic cultures in recalcitrant conifer varieties. The method is also well suited for producing somatic embryos that can be further cultured to produce large numbers of plants. Further, the invention provides novel methods that may be used to enhance somatic embryogenesis in a broad range of species.

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